

IN CHRIST ONENESS

A disciple is a student and adherent to another's teaching. True disciples of Jesus listen, learn and follow His teaching (John 8:31). They are the life-long students; He is the Master Teacher. Thus disciples are called Christians (Acts 11:26).

Jesus taught that discipleship is costly. A believer must be willing to deny himself and carry his cross to follow Jesus because He alone is the way, the truth and the life to God (Luke 9:23; John 14:6). There are not many different ways to heaven. His way is not a broad path but a narrow, constricting one that few actually find (Matthew 7:14). He pointed out that entrance into heaven requires doing the Father's will (Matthew 7:21). Therefore, the pure and undefiled religion of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit is a narrow spiritual walk – walking God's way, not man's; walking according to God's truth, not man's changing philosophies.

God's blessing of justification is granted to all who are in Christ. "The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham saying, 'All the nations will be blessed in you'... Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, 'And to seeds,' as referring to many, but rather to one, 'And to your seed,' that is, Christ." (Galatians 3:8, 16) Justification that allows a believer to become a son and heir of God is exclusively connected with being in Christ Jesus, the Seed of Abraham. "For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus" (3:26). What about all the people near and far who want nothing to do with God's Son Jesus? They are not in Christ, and are not justified before their Creator. It is a narrow path that has dire consequences if a man rejects Jesus.

Being in Christ necessitates faith. God has provided the plan to redeem sinners, but sinners must believe. Justification is conditioned upon believing in God (Hebrews 11:6), believing in the One God sent (John 3:18; 6:29) and believing in the message and commandments of God's Anointed One (John 12:47-48). If a man does not believe in the Son of God and in His word by doing what He taught and commanded, then he is not in Christ and is excluded from all spiritual blessings.

A true believer of Christ Jesus obeys Him by clothing himself with Christ by being baptized into Christ. "For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourself with Christ" (3:27). The gospel clearly connects faith and baptism to putting on Christ and being saved (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 18:8; 22:16; 1 Peter 3:21). A believer who is not baptized as Christ the Lord commands has not clothed himself with Christ, and if he has not put on Christ in His way, the believer is not in Christ. If he is not in Christ, he is not justified but excluded from Him. Oneness in Christ is a narrow gate because all do not want to accept and do what He says.